1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-
[787] skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[492] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
532 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences
726 in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The
[822] spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue represents iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent [illegible]

A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but
[292] designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. The outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

age, and the third a woman probably a little older. They are not in any sense historical, but were obtained for the picture they give of the war-life of the Plains Indians. Both the men were renowned warriors. Bull-Robe, the older, has since died. In the case of neither was a complete account of all their achievements in war obtained; but both narratives probably refer to every war party or engagement in which they took part down to the point at which the narratives are broken off. All three narratives bear the stamp of naïve truthfulness; which, in view of the importance played in the life of the Plains tribes by the telling of war-exploits and the recounting of coups, is not surprising. It must be remembered that the narrators were not asked to describe the engagements and expeditions in which they were involved, but to narrate their personal share in them. This will account for the frequency with which an insignificant personal experience is told in detail and the general result of a war-party slurred over or ignored. The story told by the woman Watches-All has reference to the great disastrous expedition against the Piegans in 1867.

Black-Wolf's Narrative.

When I was a boy I heard about great deeds in war, and resolved to follow in the tracks of such men. When I was a young man I started out alone. I travelled, and reached the camp of another band of Gros Ventre on the Missouri. I ate there and went on to the Bear Paw Mountains. There I slept at the foot of Eagle Butte. I started again before sunrise and crossed the mountains, following Beaver Creek to the end of the mountains. I saw buffalo, and shot at them. Some one else was hunting these buffalo, and heard the shot. After shooting, I had left my horse tied at the foot of the butte, which I climbed in order to look over the country. Then I saw some one below me coming up the butte. A moment later he saw me. I raised my gun, but he dodged and ran off. Thinking he was one of a party, I ran off also, reached my horse, and rode into the timber. When I could hear and see no one, I rode to where there was a trading-post on Milk River. At night all the horses there ran off into the timber. In the morning an Assiniboine was about to go to get them, when I told him that I would go after them, and started with my gun and a rope. Then I saw what looked like a flock of blackbirds flying over a hill. Soon I saw they were people. At first I had seen only their heads. They were coming over the hill towards me, but on one side, in order to ambush me. Suddenly they were riding at me. At first I was as if dazzled, and it looked like a fog to me. Then I recovered my senses. I was some distance from the post. I did not run, but waited for them. Two of them with long whips were in the lead. I

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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Cooper felt that compensation was due them. It may be stated however that the money paid was looked upon as in the nature of a gift, and the generosity displayed in the form of counter-gifts, both to Dr. Cooper and to me, was truly touching.

I was invited to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 to work exclusively with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than religion. The two oldest women at Hays, Coming Daylight and Singer, accepted me as their "granddaughter" which was fortunate in view of the freedom allowed between grandparents and grandchildren in Gros Ventre society. Although these two old women did not speak English, I was happy in having as interpreters women who were well liked by them and who were themselves interested in "the old ways of doing things." Thus they proved valuable informants on their own account. Mary Ereaux and the late Cora Chandler were two who served admirably in both capacities in 1940; Mathilda Cuts The Rope and Mae Main aided me most ably in 1945 and 1948. Garter Snake, a valuable informant, was the only woman for whom a man, Charles Buckman, interpreted.

While on the Reservation, I enjoyed the hospitality of the School Sisters of Saint Francis at their convent. I went out, however, before nine and returned at five or six, spending each day visiting the women in their homes. There we smoked and chatted and worked in an atmosphere of easy informality. Much of the material given by the women might be classified under the heading of "expressive interviews." The older women were interested in the fact that I could take down so quickly in shorthand what the interpreter said, but occasionally checked on my accuracy, and the interpreter's as well, by asking me to read back for translation to them something they had said hours or days before!

In 1945 and 1948 when I worked with the men, who had previously cooperated with Dr. Cooper, the situation was naturally somewhat more formal than that which obtained with the women. We met in the Community Hall at Hays. As our business-like sessions proceeded, various Gros Ventre men dropped in and sat on the sidelines. Many of these, including some who were not regular informants or interpreters, such as Tom Bad Road, Steve Bradly, Rufus Warrior and others, helped by freely joining in

CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own.

Band Names and Affiliation

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together.

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band.

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num-

PLATES

142 The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and
291 belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's
301 father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both
302 of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

115 The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The
133 Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three
142 show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap
291 Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and
292 interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

531 In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father
797 of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr.
798 Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.
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2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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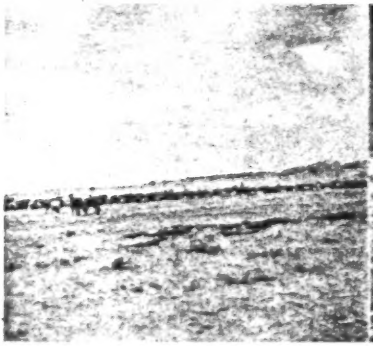
IN THE LITTLE ROCKIES

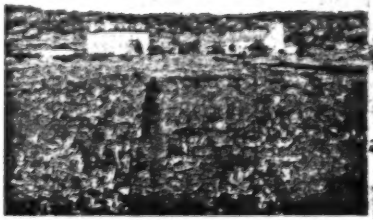
THE BOY



PLAINS NEAR HAYS

MARY, SINGER, AND COMING DAYLIGHT

[342]
[794]



ST. PAUL'S MISSION AND SCHOOL

COMING DAYLIGHT'S TIPI

PLATE II

[P.912 (8)]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

APPENDIX

THE CHIEF INFORMANTS

The Boy gave the greater bulk of information on religious and political aspects of Gros Ventre culture. He was born in 1870, one of the younger sons of Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825—d. 1908), and grandson of Crow Moccasin (whose other name was Bird Chief, b. ca. 1795—d. 1865), a signer of the 1855 Treaty. When The Boy was a very young child his father, a prominent warrior and well-to-do man, became Keeper of one of the sacred pipes—the Flat Pipe. As a boy and young man, The Boy, who was very much interested in the ceremonial and other aspects of his culture, spent as much time as possible with his father and his father's friends, listening to their discussions. In private he questioned his father repeatedly and thus he acquired a wide and deep knowledge of the Gros Ventre way of life as it was before the buffalo disappeared. Although he did well during the one year of boarding school he had at St. Peter's, he was very unhappy there, and did not enter the newly opened Mission School of St. Paul's although his father wished him to do so. He is an extremely intelligent man with marked philosophical trend of mind. In spite of his unwillingness to speak English, he became a natural leader among the Gros Ventres and served his people in many different capacities. At present he is the "grand old man" of the Gros Ventres and is appealed to when any question regarding the past arises. His statement in regard to his knowledge of the 1855 Treaty, for instance, is acknowledged as weighty evidence in the present Gros Ventre claims against the Government which are now awaiting settlement. Without The Boy's drive to have the old way of life recorded, this work could not have been accomplished.

Thick (b. ca. 1870—d. 1951) was well-versed in the old culture. It was his father who was responsible for putting on the last Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) held by the Gros Ventres in 1884. Thick's maternal uncle took advantage of his prerogative to raise his sister's children and removed Thick from his parental home at about the age of seven and kept him under supervision until Thick was a young man. Compared to his elder brother, Horse Capture, Thick was somewhat shy and retiring, entering into the public social life of the Gros Ventres only after his brother finally persuaded him to do so. A considerable amount of the material given to Dr. Cooper was related by The Boy in Thick's presence, and Thick either agreed with what had been said, or, if he disagreed, he did not hesitate to speak up. Since he and The Boy were brothers-in-law and maintained their respectful relationship, there were a number of topics which they could not discuss in each other's presence. Consequently there were many occasions when Thick worked independently of The Boy, both with Father Cooper and with me. Thick never attended school, and, like The Boy, did not speak English.

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Charles Buckman (b. ca. 1875—d. 1949), whose nickname was John, was brought up by his mother's people. He had considerable knowledge of the old way of life and his childhood training and experience remained vivid in his memory in spite of the fact that he was educated at the boarding school at St. Paul's Mission on the Reservation. He enjoyed reading the newspapers and listening to the radio and was equally interested in discussing the old way of life of the Gros Ventres and the latest developments in world politics. His services as interpreter and informant were utilized especially in many of the sessions that Dr. Cooper had jointly with Thick and The Boy. Thick found him an especially congenial interpreter. He was prominent in the public life of the Reservation and held several different offices.

Thomas Main (b. 1890) made a very extensive contribution to the record of Gros Ventre way of life in his capacity as chief interpreter. He, like Charles Buckman, was a half-orphan and was raised by his mother's people. The Boy is his maternal uncle and has exerted a considerable influence on Tom. His knowledge of the old way of life comes, too, through his old "grandmothers" for whom as a child he ran errands and who rewarded him by long stories of the "old times." He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and has always been a great reader—for years he has kept in touch with current developments not only through the usual media, but also through daily reading of the Congressional Record. His unusually good command of English, coupled with a real linguistic sense, makes him an ideal interpreter. He has been extremely patient with our efforts to take down Gros Ventre texts, and was never too hurried to explain the metaphorical expressions in which the Gros Ventre language abounds. He has taken an active part in tribal affairs and is often selected as spokesman for the Gros Ventres at the local, state, and national levels.

Al Chandler (b. ca. 1870) gave valuable information, especially in view of the fact that his relatives participated more fully in the rites connected with the Feathered Pipe rather than with those of the Flat Pipe. This helped very much to round out the picture of ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. He was educated at St. Paul's Mission School and, like Tom Main, was able to convey in English some of the finer nuances of the Gros Ventre language. Ill health prevented his giving us as many interviews as we should have liked to have had with him.

Coming Daylight (b. 1854—d. 1949) was also known by another of her names, Taken A Prisoner, and her childhood nickname had been Yellow Hair. In spite of her advanced age in 1940, she was a vigorous old woman in full possession of her faculties and had her own house independently of any of her many relatives. She maintained throughout the years her reputation for industry, generosity and hospitality and was highly respected. She was very much interested in the taking of the record of the old way of life and gave most freely of her personal experiences, and referred as well to what she had heard from her uncle, her grandmother and other older people whose experiences extended further into the past than her own. She had been orphaned at an early age and was brought up by a strict old

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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grandmother under the protection of her mother's brother, Crow Bull, (b. ca. 1825—d. 1887) a prosperous and prominent warrior, who for a number of years was Keeper of the Flat Pipe. She was married as a child-bride to Dressed in White, whom she loved and respected and who later also acquired as wife her younger sister. She was still a young woman when her husband died. Her following two marriages were each of short duration, but with her next husband, Little Man, she lived many years until she was again widowed. It was during this marriage that the drastic change in Gros Ventre culture occurred with the disappearance of the buffalo. Her last husband, Warrior, pre-deceased her by many years. By 1945 her health had begun to fail although her memory was still good. In 1948, however, she was very ill and was not able to work. To Coming Daylight we owe the bulk of the material on the life cycle and the woman's point of view on social and religious activities.

Singer (b. ca. 1855—d. 1947) was often present when her friend, Coming Daylight, was talking about the old ways of doing things. On these occasions as well as when she was interviewed alone, she volunteered a great deal of information independently. Her lot had not been as fortunate as that of Coming Daylight. Her first marriage at the age of ten or eleven was to join her sister as co-wife. She was soon sent home to her father and her next marriage, which lasted for some time, was an unhappy one. She was mistreated by the senior wife, who was not related to her, and their husband not only permitted this but was cruel to her himself. Her next two marriages, first to Iron Bucket and later to Ax Handle, turned out more successfully. In her old age she married her last husband, Sleeping Bear, whom she outlived by some years. She seems to have been less inclined towards domesticity than was Coming Daylight, and enjoyed to the full such activities as gambling, counting coups, and rough and tumble games and jests with her brothers-in-law and her enemy-friends.

Garter Snake (b. ca. 1860) has been blind for a number of years and consequently was not able to enter into the giving of the record with the same spirit and interest as either Coming Daylight or Singer. Nevertheless she gave valuable information. She is the daughter of Bull Lodge, (b. ca. 1825—d. ca. 1900?) who had been not only Keeper of the sacred Feathered Pipe but also was a famous medicine man. She had been selected as Pipe Child at the time her father became Keeper and thus remained in the same lodge as her parents while the other children, including her brother, Otter Robe, were sent to live with relatives. Although Garter Snake volunteered practically no information on her personal experiences, except those of early childhood, she gave a considerable amount of material and independently corroborated a number of points which had been given by others. She is at present the wife of Jim Shortman.

Cora Chandler, late wife of Al Chandler, referred to above, acted as interpreter for Coming Daylight and Singer in 1940. She attended St. Paul's School but was raised by relatives who spoke only Gros Ventre. In many friendly chats with me she elaborated upon various topics which had been

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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discussed by the old women during our regular sessions, drawing on her knowledge of the old way of life she had acquired from her mother and other old women she had known. Not infrequently she referred to the contrast between the type of behavior that had been expected of her and that which is characteristic of the younger generation today.

Mary Ereaux, at present living off the Reservation at Dodson, was also an interpreter for the oldest informants in 1940. Like Cora, she too kindly supplemented their information from what she had seen and heard in her youth among relatives who conserved the old ways. She volunteered many comments on the change of culture she is witnessing and thus threw much light on the past.

Mathilda Cuts The Rope interpreted for the two oldest women in 1945. Her mother, though younger than Coming Daylight, had been very friendly with the latter and Mathilda was able to add some information on her own regarding social customs of former times.

Mae Main, wife of Thomas Main, like other women of her age, attended school but was brought up among conservative relatives. In 1945 and in 1946 she read those portions of the preliminary draft of this manuscript which dealt with the life cycle and informally gave additional valuable information which has subsequently been incorporated.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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PREFACE

This second part of the record of the "old way of life" of the Gros Ventres of Montana was written by Rt. Rev. John M. Cooper, late Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America. The manuscript had been all but completed by him at the time of his death in 1949. Dr. Cooper had intended to incorporate changes that might be suggested in view of my 1948 field check-up of the contents of the volume and then to critically edit the manuscript,—as only he could have done. I have thought it best to publish the manuscript essentially as Dr. Cooper had written it and to give additional information, obtained in 1948 and subsequently, in footnotes identified as my own. I have also added the cross-references to The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part I, Social Life, which appeared in 1953 and which was intended as a background for the present volume.

The general plan of the joint undertaking by Dr. Cooper and myself, and the procedure followed by us, have been outlined in the Preface and the Introduction to Part I, Social Life. Data on the principal informants have been given in the Appendix to that volume. These will not be repeated. We must note, however, with profound regret that Thomas Main died in November, 1952, and that The Boy died in January, 1956.

The Boy, a man of distinct philosophical turn of mind, as mentioned several times by Dr. Cooper in the present volume, is responsible for the greater part of the material on ritual and ceremonial aspects of Gros Ventre life. The Boy, to a greater degree than his contemporaries, had been interested in ritual and its meaning since his early youth. From his father, Lame Bull, a keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe and an outstanding man, The Boy had acquired a rich store of knowledge which his enquiring mind enlarged in adult life. He was constantly discussing the past of his people with many other men, older than himself, who had participated more fully than was possible for him to do in the Gros Ventre way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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CHAPTER IV

THE FEATHERED PIPE AND OTHER PIPES

115 78 Our information is less full and more fragmentary on the Feathered Pipe than on the Flat Pipe, especially regarding ritual details. Our chief informants were Al Chandler, Garter Snake, Jim Shortman, Charles Buckman, The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main and Turn Toes. Additional information was given by Cora Chandler, Singer, and Mary Ereaux. The Boy, our main informant on the Flat Pipe, had never been intimately associated with the Feathered Pipe, as he had been with the Flat Pipe, but he gave us many details, and especially six of the Feathered Pipe songs recorded (Nos. 45-46, 126-129). Al Chandler had been chosen as attendant at one of the more important rites; Garter Snake had been Pipe child, beginning at the age of six or seven, during part of the keepership of her father, Bull Lodge; Jim Shortman recalled much from the time when his father had been keeper. Garter Snake, blind, of keen memory and now a practicing Catholic, before giving her account knelt down, blessed herself and prayed to Ixtcibani:hahat; for, she said, this Pipe was given from heaven. (For her own and other versions of the origin of the Feathered Pipe, see No. 6 in Appendix.) She was particularly concerned to tell truthfully what and only what her father had told her or what she had herself seen and experienced. All of the above informants had witnessed or participated in some of the Feathered Pipe rites. So far as we could discover, however, no one Gros Ventre at the time of our field work was familiar with the whole cycle of rites or with all the details of any of the more important ones. Much is lost for good. Our task has been to salvage what we could and to put together the scattered fragments, leaving many lacunae. In presenting the data we have, we shall follow the same order as has been followed in describing the Flat Pipe.

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CHAPTER V

THE SACRED DANCES

General Features

In the Gros Ventre public cult, as contrasted with more or less private cult concepts and observances, next after the sacred Pipe ceremonies, in order of rank and importance in the native view, were the Sacred Dances or Lodges,—the terms are used interchangeably, and while etymologically "Lodge" is correct, our informants preferred usually "Dance."

There were eight of these Sacred Dances: the Sacrifice Dance (commonly but incorrectly called the Sun Dance), the "Law Enforcers" or Old Man's Dance, the Drum Dance, the Kit-Fox Dance, the Dog Dance, the Crazy Dance, the Fly Dance, and the Old Women's Dance.[1] Of these eight, the Sacrifice Dance was more generally regarded as the "greatest," ranking first in order of importance and dignity, but somewhat outside of the others which have been mentioned in descending order. All eight were regarded as sacred rites, not merely social or good-time occasions, although such elements entered into them or were associated with them.

Ordinarily a person participated in or vowed during his life first the Fly Dance; only after this the Crazy, Kit-fox, Dog, Drum and Sacrifice Dances, and finally the Old Man's Dance.

Our chief informants on the Sacred Dances were The Boy, Turn Toes, Thick, Charles Buckman, Coming Daylight, and Singer. Lame Bull, from whom The Boy got most of his information on the Dances, had gone through all of them except the Drum Dance. He had even been selected as one of the two outstanding

[1] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 227-268, gives an excellent account of these Dances, gotten at a time, nearly half a century ago, when tribal memory was fresher. Our data may help to fill out some of the picture.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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*796 [276] [801] Sacrifice Dance center pole, the sacred Pipes did not enter at all into the Sacred Lodges.

In all the Sacred Dances, the ritual number was four and movement was clockwise.

A sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, but we could obtain no details on it; whether also in connection with the others our informants could not say.

The Sacrifice, Drum, Kit-fox, Dog and Crazy Dances regularly lasted four nights and days; the Fly and probably the Old Men's and Old Women's just one day.

The sacred Dances were not held in the winter time when the bands were usually widely scattered, but in the period from about May or June when the bands foregathered to September after which the bands tended to scatter for the fall buffalo hunt.

[361] The lodges for the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances were very simple and were put up outside the camp circle toward the south thereof. The lodges for the other Dances were erected inside the camp circle, near the center.

Feasting daily during the four-day dances was customary, except during the Sacrifice Dance which entailed much fasting on the part of the participants.

The alternation of reverent tension and pleasurable free release that characterized the sacred Pipe rites was even more characteristic of the Sacred Dances.

Sacrifice Dance

*796 The proper name of the Gros Ventre dance commonly referred to by whites and by many English-speaking Gros Ventres as the Sun Dance is aθe:hao'wə (literally, "sacrifice lodge"—aθe:'atc "sacrifice" and -ao'wə "sacred [not common] lodge"; cf. Sifton "sacrifice," athéyach and "Sun Dance," athéihawh'). We are therefore using the term Sacrifice Dance for it. The sun does not enter at all into it. The name apparently has references to the tortures undergone around the center pole by the main participants.

●115 Our chief informants on the Sacrifice Dance were The Boy and Thick, who had witnessed the rite as boys and who had learned much about it from their elders: Coming Daylight, who had wit-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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nessed the rite about ten times, Singer who had taken part in it by giving presents, by singing, and by riding double with the men going out to look for the center pole; Mathilda Cuts-the-rope; Al Chandler, and Thomas Main. Thick's father made the last Sacrifice Dance in 1884.[10]

The origin Story of the Sacrifice Dance as told by The Boy is as follows:

"In the days when Ni:hohat was still around, a Gros Ventre man went out hunting in the timberland where there was a lot of trees and brush. While he was hunting he heard a noise. He listened to find the direction from which the noise was coming and then went in that direction. He sneaked around and looked from under cover. He saw a dance going on. A bunch of buffalo were dancing in a circle. He looked on a long time unseen by them. He heard the songs they were singing and learned them, and saw how everything was done. He saw a buffalo bring the other buffalo and set them in a semi-circle, and saw them sit down in a semi-circle.

"He made up his mind to approach them. So he walked over to where they were. When the leader of the buffalo, at the back of the lodge opposite the door, saw him, he invited him to come in and sit down beside him: 'Do like we are doing. Look around and see how the lodge is made. Study it and try to remember it and all the things here.' The man saw a buffalo skull alongside the center pole.

"The chief buffalo then said to him: 'I give you this lodge (dance). Use it. If in sickness or in danger the people promise they will make a Sacrifice Dance I will help them. When you implore the help of the Sacrifice Dance, it will be a powerful means to avert sickness or danger.' So the man left and went back home and related what he had seen and experienced. He is

[10] In 1948 The Boy, Charles Buckman and Steve Bradley among them were able to name 15 of the 23 Dancers whose flesh was pierced at this last Dance, as follows: Bull Head, Horse Capture (Thick's brother), Stiffarm, Wolf, Stiff Wings, Grebe Child (The Boy's brother), Arrowhead, Peter Capture, Boy Capture, Strikes On Top, Dan Sleeping Bear, Skinner, Many Capture, Stabber, Fluttering Eagle. Dan Sleeping Bear had told Charles Buckman that there had been 23 altogether. [R.F.]

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

121 eral study of the social organization and religion of the Gros Ventre, at the Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana, in about equal proportions by Flannery in the summers of 1940 and 1945 and by Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940, from Gros Ventre informants, mostly of the older generation. In most cases we
● 115 used interpreters; in some, we communicated in English. Our chief informants on gambling were: The Boy (b.1872, our most important source, who had gotten a good deal of his information from his father, Lame Bull, b.1825, d.1908), Thick (b. ca. 1870-71), Charles John Buckman (b.1872), Mrs Takes-a-Prisoner Warrior (b. ca. 1850-55) and Mrs Singer Sleeping-Bear (b. ca. 1860). These informants were exceptionally intelligent and dependable, and were not only willing to give us the information they had but anxious to do so. In spite of this, not all the past could, of course, be recaptured, and in certain parts the picture we got is far from complete, particularly regarding individual differences and motivations. However, we have had extremely little reconstruction proper to do, as most of the older gambling complex survived up to near the turn of the century, and had been actively participated in and/or witnessed and was vividly remembered by our informants, while some parts of it, especially many of the social aspects thereof, have persisted down to the present.

WAGERS AND BETTING PROCEDURE

525 Stakes wagered by the Gros Ventre may be divided into small or trivial ones and big or valuable ones. Small stakes consisted of such things as arrows, bows, bags, beads, pipes, knives, handkerchiefs, dishes, and so forth; big ones, of such things as guns, saddles, lodges, and especially horses (the chief wealth in the old days). Wives were never wagered. Two teams might play mostly for fun, the losers being merely expected or obligated to provide a smoke, or, as more commonly, refreshments or a meal—"to cook," as the current expression goes—for the winners. This last was seemingly the only type of non-dyadic wagering in vogue among the Gros Ventre, if it can be called wagering at all, for such provision of smokes or food for relatives and friends was an everyday custom. Mrs Sleeping-Bear stated that in a gambling game she once played with her husband's brother, she forfeited her eyebrows, which he pulled out, but whether this was an exceptional occurrence or a customary one within the prevalent pattern of rough familiarity between brother-in-law and sister-in-law we could not discover.

Betting was typically dyadic, a given individual matching the wager of another individual, and the stakes going to the winning individual. The dyadic system was kept to even where, as was common, betting was by sides, each side,

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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525 572 578 538 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel. Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they had a rought-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top, astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt. Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time]. You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

●[115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling, died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man, a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, according to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career betimes lest later Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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525 did not want to lose it," and her grandmother used to advise her against gambling lest she lose valued things. All in all it looks as if economic considerations had little to do with such disapproval of gambling as was current among the Gros Ventre; if anything, economic considerations and concepts of property use and disposal would in the main have reinforced approval.

To sum up, Gros Ventre attitudes on gambling appear to have been influenced very much by concern for altruism and accord, very little by economic values.

PAST AND PRESENT

525 To round out the picture we have tried to give of Gros Ventre gambling,
773 we are adding a brief sketch of its history.

Gros Ventre myth, folk lore, and tradition have little to say on gambling. According to one folk story, given by Mrs Sleeping Bear, but unknown to Mrs Warrior, the hand game was first gotten from the thunder by a certain Tsē'ganis (Little Short Horns). There is no reference to gambling in the fairly complete cycle of sacred myths we gathered or in the trickster (Nihāt'a) cycle.[8] This absence, particularly from the trickster cycle, may give some slight ground for suspecting that gambling may not go back very far in Gros Ventre culture history.

525 Apart, however, from such speculative surmise, what is clear is that gambling was in full vigor among the Gros Ventre in the second half of the last century, and had been since at least around the early part of the century. It was in full swing from at least the early boyhood days of Lame Bull who was born in 1825.

525 Gros Ventre gambling, especially with the wheel and hand games, suffered
182 a severe shock after the disappearance of the buffalo in 1884, as did the main structure of Gros Ventre culture and society. With the rapid collapse of the broad framework into which gambling had so trimly fitted, gambling itself, especially with the older games, rapidly toppled down. The last big wheel game remembered by five older informants—The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman, Steven Bradley, Philip Shortman—occurred in 1893; the last big hand game in 1891.[9] Around the turn of the century not much of the older complex was

8 Gambling does however occur in the Found-in-the-Grass Gros Ventre folk story, according to The Boy. Gambling at the wheel game between Clotted-Blood and the Bull is recorded in the Clotted-Blood tale, by A. L. Kroeber, *Gros Ventre Myths and Tales* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, pt. 3, 1907), p. 86.

[115]

9 When in the field we failed to obtain these exact dates. We are indebted for them to our conscientious, high-minded and exceptionally able interpreter, Thomas Main, who procured them for us from the above five elder informants and forwarded them to us with some other supplementary information by letter of September 25, 1946.

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

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ALTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tent is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuwaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 tain. When the spirit finished smoking he put the pipe outside
539 the curtain and my uncle said: 'Well, I want you to hunt my brother-in-law to see where he is or what became of him.' Immediately the spirit made a noise and we could hear it going out of the top of the lodge which shook violently again. The people all sat quietly smoking and listening. Then old Good Singer called from behind the curtain: 'Sing again four times.' So they began to sing and I joined in. After the fourth repetition the spirit came back in the same way as it entered the first time, dropping down behind the curtain and landing with a thump. Every time the spirit goes in or out the top of the lodge shakes. Then the spirit made the exclamation which the Gros Ventres use to indicate that something terrible has happened, and continued: 'You should have told him [Holy Weasel] to stay at home. He and his party were killed. They were raiding the enemy and came across some Piegan. The latter made believe they were meeting the Gros Ventre in a friendly way, but when they got close they killed all the party except one who escaped.'

"Just before the spirit made this last speech, two little boys in the lodge had been playing during that ceremony and the spirit told them: 'Be quiet because I am going to tell you what happened.' And before they knew what happened to them these two little boys landed outside the lodge. The spirit must have pushed them out! And everybody was certainly quiet after that."

The second account will illustrate some differences in procedure when a spiritualist was consulted while a party was on
● [115] the move and on the look-out for enemies. It was told to me by another old woman informant, Singer Sleeping Bear, incidentally to a long story of one of the journeys made by members of her father's group when she was a small girl.

"The party got as far as Canada and stayed all night. One of the men filled his pipe and took it over to another man, Rising Cross, and said: 'Now here. I am giving you the pipe. I want you to invite your spirit. I want you to ask your spirit if the road is clear (that is, if there is no enemy in sight).' Rising Cross took the pipe and prayed a few moments. The other men

5: Flannery E-5 (1940)1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

made a small rounded lodge of willows, just like a sweat lodge. 787
A few of them went in there with the spiritualist who just sat 539
there with them as one of the group. He did, however, smoke the pipe and sing his song. Finally this little lodge shook so hard it almost fell over. It was like a terrible wind. Then a voice said: 'Yes, yes, what do you want?' Rising Cross said: 'Well, we want to know if the way is clear. We are looking for the enemy. How will the way be near where they are?' So the spirit said: 'Well, if you do as I say you are going to kill the chief (the father of a captive Piegan who had married among the Gros Ventres). Go up over the hill and you will see the plain just covered with lodges. If you don't turn back immediately after you kill that one man, you are going to have bad luck.'

"So the young fellows jumped on their fastest horses and went off. They found the situation as described by the spirit. The man whom the spirit mentioned was riding up the trail along the coulee accompanied only by a woman on horseback. When these two had gotten some distance from the lodges in the plain, the young Gros Ventre took after them and killed the man, but the woman wheeled her horse and sped back to the camp to give the alarm. The Gros Ventres said to one another: 'Now you know what the spirit told us. It told us to run just as soon as we killed him.' And the majority was in favor, but one man was obstinate. While they were arguing the enemies approached and were able to overtake most of them. Only a few escaped. It is always someone who doesn't believe the spirit who ruins the party."

That there might occasionally have been some room for 787
doubting the validity of the information received through a par- 515
ticular spirit is suggested by a comment made by another informant, Al Chandler, a middle-aged man. He had mentioned an old woman spiritualist, David Man's grandmother, and said that she was honest about it and her spirit could be depended upon for the truth. He added, however: "But a man I knew used to hold seances and had his own brother as his spirit. This spirit always lied. When this brother was living he was a liar, so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper.

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be.

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word tsatsawâ·'ª. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to tsatsa—"coming, flight"; plus—wa, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are tsa·k'ª (sing.; pl., tsa·k'an: a's as u in English but), and bie'te'ᵉ (sing.; pl. bi'eten). Tsatsawâ·'ª is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called nata'nhehi (a's as u in but), but there was no special name

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 174 796 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 796 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolfmen. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

● [115]

[7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.